

Congresswoman NYDIA M. VELAZQUEZ

Representing New York's 12th Congressional District
Ranking Democrat, House Small Business Committee



Congress Enacts Airport Security

Velázquez hosts public health, homeland security forum

Congress enacted sweeping changes to increase security at airports last month, determined to maintain safety in the skies. The law will put federal security workers at every airport for three years and require the screening of each piece of luggage that goes on board an aircraft.



Congresswoman Velázquez listens to a constituent at a forum to discuss bioterrorism and homeland security with officials from New York City, the EPA, FBI and the Centers for Disease Control.

In addition, Congresswoman Velázquez hosted a forum with representatives from the City and federal government to respond to concerns about bioterrorism and public health in New York.

Forum attendees learned about how to protect themselves from anthrax and other bioterrorism threats. Representatives from the FBI, the City and the Centers for Disease Control attended and took questions from the audience.

Concerns about the long-term health effects of fumes from the still-burning underground fire at the World Trade Center were also addressed. The Environmental Protection Agency continues to monitor air and water quality while joining the City in regularly cleaning streets and buildings in Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn.

"It is important to know that your vigilance helps keep our communities safe," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "Information is your best defense."

Velázquez Wins Major Relief Bill

Small Business Committee takes grants, low-cost loans to full Congress

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez won a major victory for helping New York City when her committee approved comprehensive small business disaster relief legislation. Congresswoman Velázquez is the top Democrat on that committee.

The bill includes Velázquez's proposal to provide disaster grants and low- or no-cost loans to help companies in New York that were affected by the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

Also, the bill makes small financial institutions and non-profit organizations eligible for disaster aid. Many of these companies were located in and near the World Trade Center and are not currently eligible for assistance.

"I am excited the committee has produced such comprehensive legislation," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "I am sure Congress will soon make it law."



Congresswoman Velázquez, with U.S. Small Business Administrator Hector Barreto, meet with members of the community last month to discuss the need for disaster relief.

Citizenship Drives Help More to Become Citizens

Congresswoman Velázquez cosponsored forums to aid application process



Congresswoman Velázquez helps naturalization applicants at a Citizenship Drive held last month.

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez joined NALEO and East Brooklyn Immigrants in Action to host two citizenship drives last month to help those in the immigrant community who are interested in becoming citizens.

Volunteers were on hand to help fill out forms, take photographs, and assemble applications for a small fee.

Applicants are encouraged to complete their paperwork soon, because INS fees will increase after the first of the year.

The district offices of Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez provide services for people interested in gaining American citizenship. Contact a caseworker there by calling 1-718-599-3658.



Velázquez Wins Funds for Gowanus Work Plan

\$225,000 to fund comprehensive reuse study after environmental survey

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez secured \$225,000 for the Gowanus Canal Community Development Corporation to complete a comprehensive community development plan for the area around the canal in Brooklyn. The Gowanus Canal runs one and a half miles from Butler Street to the New York Bay. Years of municipal wastewater overflow and local industrial discharge have contaminated the canal and sediments, making it a health hazard.



Congresswoman Velázquez meets community activist Buddy Scotto (left) and Army Corps of Engineers Assistant Secretary Joseph Westphal during a visit to Gowanus earlier this year.

While construction of the Red Hook Water Pollution Control Treatment Plant and the recent reactivation of a flushing tunnel have significantly improved the water quality in the Canal, habitat restoration will not be done until the contaminated canal sediments have been removed.

Last year Congresswoman Velázquez asked the Army Corps of Engineers to assess the feasibility of dredging the canal to remove contaminated sediment permanently.

The Development Corporation’s community-intensive planning process will guide the Corps of Engineers survey as part of a comprehensive plan to build more parks, homes and businesses along the Canal.

“I have been working hard to make sure the Gowanus Canal is cleaned up, rehabilitated, and reused,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “This money, along with the Army Corps study, are two big steps towards creating a resource that everyone can use and enjoy.”

Grants Awarded to Our Community

Bishop Ford Central High School.....\$5,497 Supports “E-Rate” Internet connections	Gowanus Canal Local Dev. Corp.....\$225,000 Funds comprehensive economic reuse plan
United Talmudic Academy of Boro Park.....\$105,000 Supports Head Start school programs	Brooklyn Hospital Center.....\$144,232 Supports HIV primary care services
Brooklyn Economic Development Corp.....\$110,000 Funds technical assistance for revitalization efforts	New York City Technical College.....\$186,653 Funds programs on low retention/graduation
Kings County District Attorney.....\$200,000 Supports Community Prosecution Program	N.Y.C. Board of Education.....\$250,000 Funds bilingual education teacher training